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A MODERN MONTE CRISTO

AND HIS ISLAND
A Romantic Glimpse into Geology

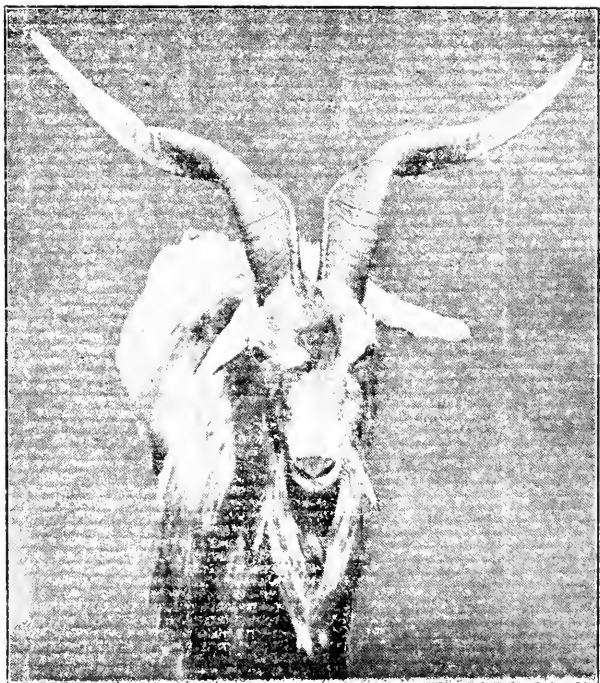
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Frederic W. Jones.



Monte Cristo



A MODERN MONTE CRISTO
AND HIS ISLAND
A Romantic Glimpse Into Goatology



BY FREDERIC W. JONES



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ILLUSTRATIONS

FRONTISPIECE Monte Cristo

The Block and Tackle Route

Ten Thousand Goats Headed for a Drink
at the Spring

A Gang of Herders

Trapped at the Spring by the Corral System

Billies and Nannies in Quarantine Awaiting
Shipment

Author's Foreword

The motor ship "Gryme" at municipal pier, was laden with several hundred live wild goats. We watched them being unloaded. Four to six at each lift, were grappled by the horns with a hoisting contrivance of ropes, pulley-blocks, etc.—in other words, they were transported from the hold of the vessel to the docks, via the "Block and Tackle" route.

Each bunch of cud-chewers presented a sorry spectacle as they dangled in mid-air, with no apparent destination or clue on which to base hope for a much needed relief and their bulging glassy eyes seemed about ready to burst from their sockets. Thus suspended, these ruminant captives were jostled against one another's faces in such a manner as to appear comical. As their goatees seemed to frantically puncture

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each others eyes and ears it would have been difficult to determine whether their grimaces should be construed as exhibitions of resentment rather than tokens of affection through their osculatory medium, when their noses bumped together.

This scene fills me with curiosity to learn more about these goats. It is said they were born on Guadalupe (Wadaloopy) Island. I understand the "Gryme" returns for another load in a day or two and if opportunity is given, I have decided to avail myself.



The Block and Tackle Route

CHAPTER I

A TRIP TO THE ISLAND

The motor ship "Gryme" had recently received a coat of paint and looked quite dressed up.

The Captain gave the signal and in a very few minutes our vessel was gracefully pulling out from municipal pier into the San Diego beautiful land-locked Bay which was resplendent with activity. Ferry boats were plying between the city and the Coronado peninsula. The Pacific fleet was represented by many battle ships, armored cruisers of various classes, auxiliary cruisers, torpedo vessels and destroyers, monitors, submarines, submarine chasers, transports, gun boats, speed motor launches, tugs and colliers, together with innumerable merchant vessels and minor craft.

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Overhead sailed many airplanes, hydroplanes and dirigibles and last but not least, a swarm of sea gulls darting with jealous fury in every direction.

I never look out upon the ocean without being attracted by the sea gulls; and never grow tired of watching their movements both on the water and in the air. They are certainly artists when it comes to floating or flying. Quite a flock are now approaching our ship. Could anything be more majestic than their outspread wings? and they are such perfect navigators. They swoop around and go just where they want to go without the slightest effort. They have no more fear of the water than they have of the air; they sit right down in it as if it wasn't wet. They can ride on a crest of foam and appear as comfortable as we could be in a rocking chair. They have a happy-go-lucky way of falling into the water just as a trapeze performer drops into the net below him; the only difference is, the gull is sure to arrive right side up.

Two of these birds have just alighted on

the railing of the upper deck, so near to me that I can almost touch them. I am screened from their view, but can plainly see them through the cabin window; one is draped in gray, which I have been told is the emblem of youth, the other is a white beauty, and may it not be possible they are mother and daughter, and if this be so, mother has captured a small fish and holds it securely beneath her pink toes. It was always difficult for me to hold a slippery fish with my whole outfit, fingers and thumbs, but behold how easily mamma can do it with one foot containing only three long toes in front and just a little stump of a toe behind. I was fortunate in getting my close range view through the cabin window, and it was a most interesting spectacle to watch the white bird manage the fish—with its bill and hook attachment, it is marvelous how adroitly they are enabled to pass a fish from their toes to the bill and back again to the toes of either foot without losing the fish? It certainly was a busy bird.

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Their little round black and shiny shoe-button eyes must possess some kind of a multiplex radio-action apparatus which enables them to see everything instantaneously in any direction all the time. There is the fish to watch as well as an endless number of jealous snappers hanging around, losing no opportunity to grab the fish, and they doubtless have many other things to think of that we don't know about.

Coronado and North Island are beginning to fade behind us and we are drawing near the construction works of the new United States Marine Corps Base. Passing out through the harbor channel entrance, with Point Loma to our right, we approach the ocean. The Coronado Islands are seen fifteen miles to the southwest. We make no stops until we reach Ensenada, Mexico, where we should arrive early in the morning.

The quiet harbor of Ensenada now lies before us. The sun is casting its radiance

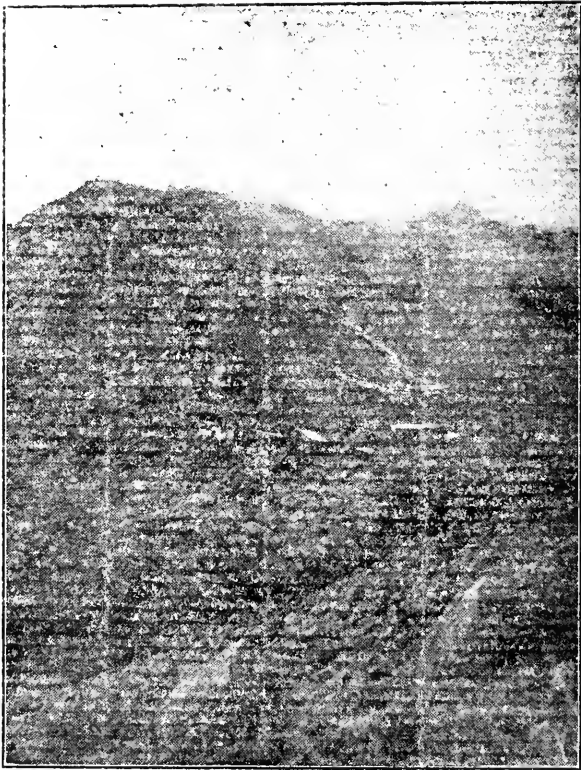
above the Eastern Horizon. Until recently this town was the seat of the Mexican government for the northern district of Lower California. It has been moved to Mexicala, in the Imperial Valley. There is merchandise to be unloaded here and we expect to depart westward this afternoon and should arrive at Guadalupe Island tomorrow evening.

We now get our first glimpse of Guadalupe late in the afternoon. It glistens in the sun's rays like an opal and such an iridescent play of pearly colors are seldom seen.

CHAPTER II

DESCRIPTION OF ISLAND

Guadalupe Island is situated about two hundred and forty miles out in the Pacific Ocean southwest of San Diego in latitude 29 degrees 10 minutes North, longitude 118 degrees 17 minutes West, and is twenty miles long and from three to seven miles wide. It is traversed north and south throughout its length by a chain of mountains, the most elevated of which near the northern end is 4500 feet high. The shores are in general, bold, rocky bluffs with detached rocks close to, but outside of one-quarter mile. There are no known dangers to navigation except a sunken rock on the west side about four miles north of the south point and three-quarters of a mile off shore. Very deep water surrounds the island, there being 1420 fathoms at 4 miles .



Ten Thousand Goats Headed for a Drink
at the Spring

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from its northern end 1121 fathoms at $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles from its southern end; between the island and the main land are depths of over 2000 fathoms. One fathom equals six feet.

The island is of volcanic origin and can be seen in clear weather at a distance of about sixty miles. The southern part of the island is very barren, but the northern part has some vegetation on the mountains and several fertile valleys. Wood and water are obtained from a small cove near the northeastern end of the island. Off the south end are two rocky inlets, inner inlet, 744 feet high, is separated from the island by a passage about a quarter of a mile wide, in which are depths of eleven fathoms, with rocks under water, and several rocks out of the water; two detached rocks lie a quarter of a mile from its southeastern side. Outer inlet 677 feet high, is separated from inner inlet by a deep channel seven-eighths of a mile wide.

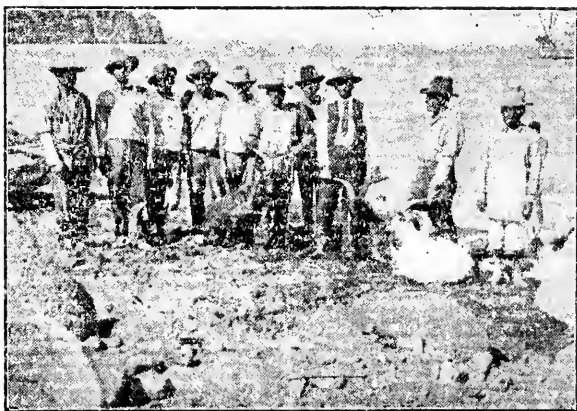
Milpomene Cove, at the south end of the island, affords anchorage in nine fathoms, sheltered from all but southerly winds.

CHAPTER III

WHENCE COMETH OUR GOATS

Following the precedent of Adam and Eve—after many years, Billie and Nannie Goat are said to have settled on Guadalupe Island and their descendants of Billies and Nannies, through many generations, have in all probability, numbered into the millions by this time.

History does not seem to record when or how these Billies and Nannies first established themselves, but it is not unreasonable to believe that their exodus may date back to the arrival of the Franciscan or Jesuite Fathers or much earlier, in fact, who shall give evidence that Charles V. of Spain in 1542, did not commission Cabrillo to secure for him a goat ranch, which might be none other than Guadalupe?



A Gang of Herders

It has been estimated that there are upwards of one hundred thousand goats on the island at the present time. The birth rate is said to reach from five to seven hundred daily and the death rate to have reached as high as 50 per cent. During the present year, however, the death rate has been much higher than the average, owing to an unexpected visit from a multitude of locusts which swept down upon the island and made a cleaning of everything to eat and the poor Billies and Nannies are said to have starved by the thousand. This calamity was soon followed by rains and such goats as managed to subsist on water were kept alive until the new crop of grass and weeds commenced to sprout.

CHAPTER IV

MONTE CRISTO AND HIS ISLAND

According to thrilling narratives verbally given by various authorities among the islanders, the photograph of Count Monte Cristo, the name by which he was universally known, presents him very much subdued from what he appeared during his heroic past.

He was first brought into prominence through his escape, when a prisoner on a motor ship, and his safe return to his island home after a three-mile swim.

His capture was effected by being trapped at the spring, around which a corral had been constructed. Our hero came down with a crowd of his companions to quench his thirst at the only spring on the island.



Trapped at the Spring by the Corral System

He was then unsophisticated—after having been passed into the hands of a gang of ship company's employes, he discovered too late, the plot, and the object of a corral which robbed him of his freedom and forced him to take the block and tackle route.

Soon after pulling out to sea, our hero must have done some heavy thinking, for when only a short distance from land, the alarm was given that a goat had jumped overboard. No attempt was made to recover him, and the incident was considered by all hands to be a case of lost goat.

As a result of this occurrence, our hero gained the name of the Count of Monte Cristo in commemoration of Alexandre Dumas' famous hero, which name stuck to him throughout his subsequent career.

The Count's experience after jumping overboard has never been told, but that he made a successful three-mile swim and reached his native land has been proven beyond the shadow of a doubt on testimony of witnesses who claim to know positively

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by certain prominent and indisputable characteristics.

From all reports, it would seem that the Count's escape from a salt water grave had wrought within his whole being, an insatiable desire to appease the Goat Gods for his miraculaus deliverance, and as proof of his sincerity, to devote his future career to the furtherance of the highest interests of his fellow goats.

In accordance with the foregoing predilection the Count, since his escape, has been ever on the alert to defeat the efforts of the herding gangs to corral a sufficient number of goats to meet the demands of the transportation companies for shipment, and he has shown himself to be some general, judging from the large following he has influenced, particularly among the Bilies.

His secret service department was notably efficient, as the approach of any vessel was sighted in advance; and increased vigilance was apparent in the absence of goats for long periods between drinks, so

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long indeed, that it was thought that the Count must have discovered other watering places. Careful watch was kept by the herders at the spring and efforts to secure water at midnight hours often resulted in battles in which the goats were victorious.

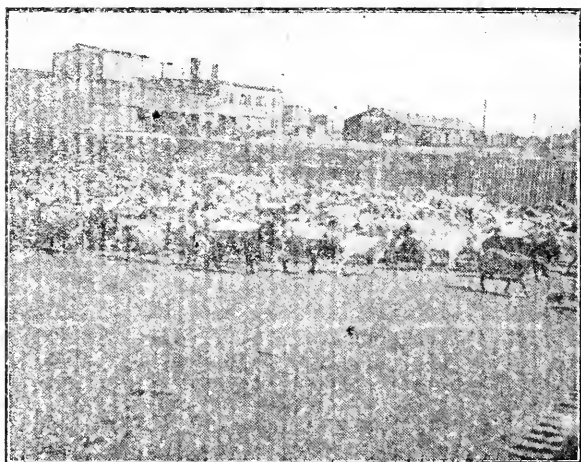
For a brief period the Count's successful marshalling of his legions continued to carry everything before them, but, Friday, the thirteenth, was the beginning of the end of the Count's successes. He was gradually approaching his "Waterloo" and from a cause least expected. It was nothing short of a calamity and one probably not equalled by the Israelites under the Pharaohs.

There appeared a black cloud, and with it, came a mighty rushing wind which covered the island with a multitude of locusts which soon devoured everything fit to eat, thousands of Billies and Nannies were left to starve amid the devastation and many of the vast army of the Count of Monte Cristo shared the same fate.

The Count, with fragments of his body

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guard were discovered after the holocaust had spent its fury and the Count was pretty much all in, being weak from exhaustion, and while he was undoubtedly thankful for the water and alfalfa sustenance tendered him by his captors, he remained obdurate and still possessed his indomitable will, but, in less degree. His photograph was taken after he had time to cool off and he appears quite resigned, although, were his inner consciousness exposed and expression given to his thoughts there might be revealed, the words made immortal by our old friend, Patrick Henry: "Give me liberty or give me death."



Billies and Nannies in Quarantine Awaiting
Shipment

CHAPTER V

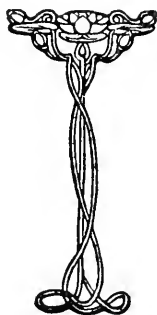
WHITHER GOETH OUR GOATS

The last ship load of goats brought over from Guadalupe by the "Gryme" numbered 550 which are shown photographed while in quarantine at the A. T. & S. F. freight yards. The bucks for the most part are shipped to packing companies at Los Angeles and other points for slaughter and eventually find their way into the meat markets designated as choice venison and lamb chops or some portions may drift into the canned goods department where they are classified under labels delicatessen specialties. The hides, hair and bones are all utilized and nothing is lost as the pork packers say "except the squeal"—a goat has never been heard to squeal.

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The better specimens of “does” find a ready market among the dairy ranchers for breeding purposes, being sired by pure-bred bucks imported from Toggenburg Valley, Switzerland, and their descendents are destined to become celebrated milchers; and goat’s milk is fast becoming baby’s first choice—mother says.



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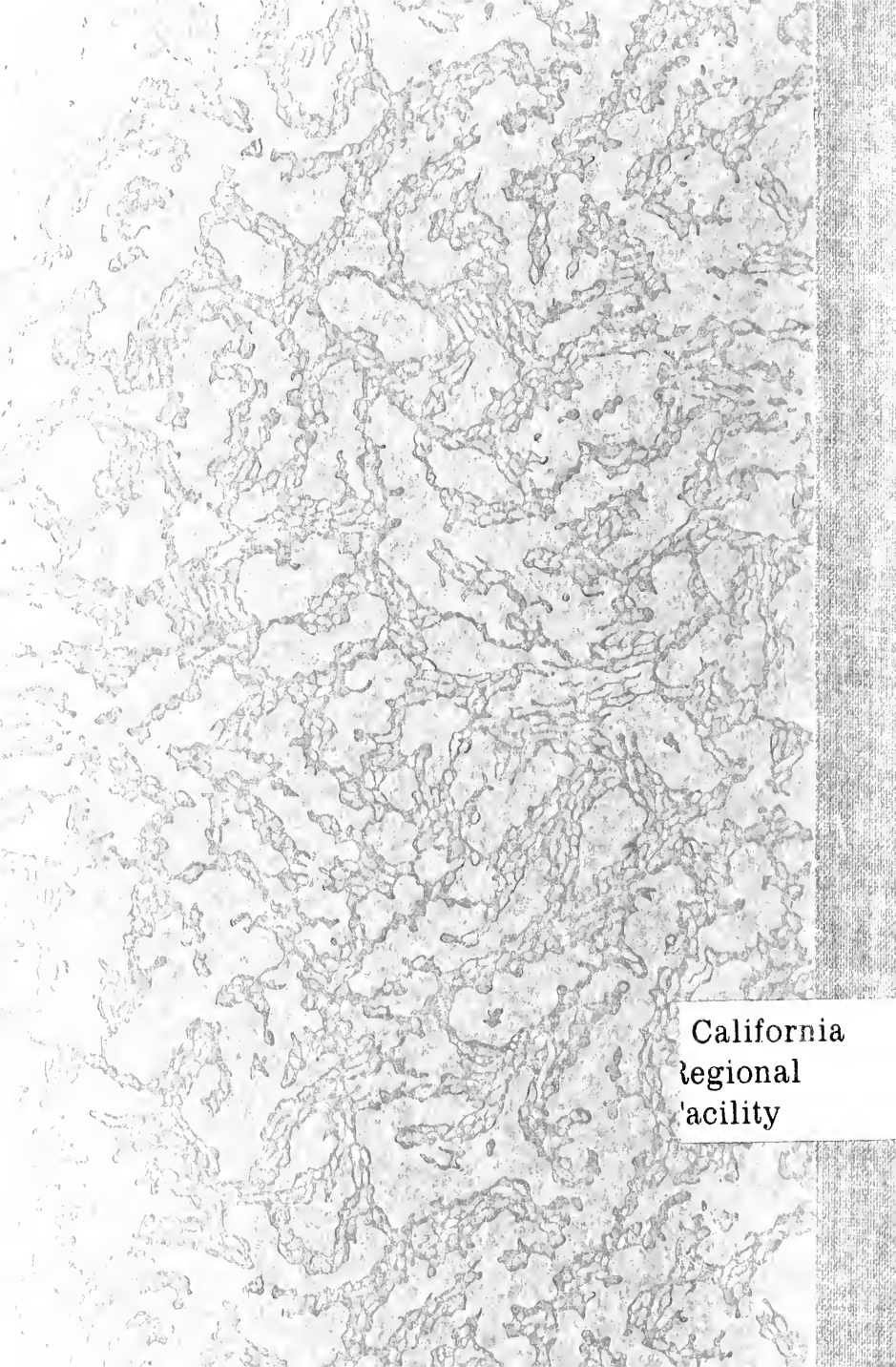


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